

Your Brand Needs to Be Easily Recognizable – Here's Why

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Key Takeaways

- Establishing trust through consistency and transparency is vital for gaining customer confidence, especially among younger consumers.
- Creative approaches and partnerships can lead to expanded market reach and economic influence, even for small businesses.
- Differentiating your brand from competitors and cultivating brand loyalty through exceptional experiences pays off with lasting consumer relationships.

In today's highly competitive market, brand recognition plays a critical role in the longevity of any business venture. And standing out has grown more challenging as a small business owner, given that customers are being bombarded with constant and countless options.

However, by fostering strong brand awareness and consistently delivering exceptional customer experiences, entrepreneurs can carve out a distinct identity and ensure lasting consumer loyalty. Here are my four reasons why prioritizing brand perception is an essential part of your long-term business strategy and why showing up in an unexpected way proves to be a timeless tactic.

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Recognition

Forming trust and credibility

Being a go-to business for consumers requires more than awareness – customers need to know they can trust your ability to serve their needs. Customers are increasingly taking to the digital world for information, making an active online presence critical for brands of all sizes. Though it may seem fundamental, consistency in logos, colors, email signatures and tone of voice matters to all audiences. Applying the same principles to all parts of your brand signals professionalism and reliability.

Younger consumers (think Gen Z and Alpha), in particular, value transparency, ethics and social responsibility when it comes to their online decision-making. More specifically, these groups gravitate toward intentional, relatable social-impact work by brands.

From a brand recognition perspective, keep in mind that younger generations are more skeptical of traditional advertising than their predecessors. Strong branding, however, enhances engagement and provides for more effective, sought-after storytelling. Small businesses have leverage in this area, as communications frequently come from a smaller team, cultivating a human element and creating an authentic voice. Use personability to your advantage by sharing your motivation for starting your business, responding personally to customer inquiries and reviews or collaborating with other small businesses on a charitable effort.

Expanding market reach and influence

Expanding your reach pushes your brand to the forefront, ensuring consumers understand the unique value your products

and services provide. Even for small businesses, some offerings can get overshadowed in an oversaturated market. But forging a new path to reach new customer segments can make all the difference.

For example, to increase customer awareness of The UPS Store's document-shredding services, we launched a campaign focused on this service, with additional advertising in a priority market. In our usual fashion of showing up unexpectedly, we made our mark in New York City with taxi toppers and digital billboards, garnering nearly 155 million impressions and generating more than \$700,000 in brand value. This campaign reminded consumers that sensitive information can and should stay private, thanks to shredding services at The UPS Store. To further amplify, we partnered with influencers to share our services and promotions with TikTok audiences.

From a small business standpoint, driving brand recognition doesn't necessarily require a massive undertaking. Consider a strategic partnership with a fellow entrepreneur or capitalizing on an emerging trend with your customer base. "Unexpected" is in the eye of the beholder.

Ousting the competition

Competitive differentiators help a brand stand out from their competitors. Whether it is the personal relationships you build with customers, community impact initiatives that cultivate local connections or a novel product that meets an overlooked need, finding your unique value proposition can elevate your brand.

Interestingly, customer trust in large corporations continues to decline. Just 52% of consumers say they trust big brands in 2024, down from 66% in 2021, according to a Gartner survey on consumer values. This data shows that being known isn't enough; consumers want meaning. More specifically, they crave relevance, personalization and connection – areas where small

business owners shine due to the deep relationships they build with their communities and other stakeholders.

When looking to get ahead, your competitive differentiator becomes your enduring signature. When people know they can count on you for restocks of bestsellers, your presence at a local art fair or reliable customer service, their buying dollar is likely to follow.

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Driving customer loyalty and repeat business

With customer trust comes brand loyalty. Brand loyalty, just as trust, must be constantly earned by ensuring an exceptional experience remains constant. Delivering reliable, high-quality experiences or products in line with customer feedback has undeniable benefits for the business bottom line. Being a brand of excellence generates unforgettable customer experiences. And when mistakes do happen, ownership is critical.

Whether you're building your customer loyalty base or recovering from an error, I've found that quick, transparent empathy goes furthest. This approach may not solve the issue immediately, but rather address it as soon as possible with the mindset of, if you were in your customer's shoes, what would set you at ease? In a world where people have endless choices, the brands that consistently listen, adapt and stand behind their promises are the ones that not only succeed – but thrive exponentially.

Identity, differentiation and ownership are the cornerstones of lasting brand recognition. By embodying these principles – not just promoting them – your organization can break through

the noise and build lasting relationships with both current and future customers.

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